President: My information is that it was sent to all the honourable members of the Council ten days ago.

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai: I have asked many of the members of this House about this matter and none of them seems to have received a copy of this report.

President: The same matter, I think, cropped up in the Assembly. On enquiry I find that copies were sent to the house address of the honourable members of the Council.

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar: Sir, I too did not get a copy.

President: Honourable members who have not got copies of the report will kindly stand up,

Most of the non-official members stood up.

President: I am afraid then that this Demand must be taken up only to morrow. I am sorry that this mistake should have occurred and I apologise to the honourable members.

DEMAND XVII—PORTS—Rs. 23,343.

Mr. P. G. Narayanan Unnithan (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, I rise to move for a grant of Rs. 23,343 under Demand XVII—Ports.

Mr. James Fletcher: Sir, I desire to make an observation on this subject. We have got various ports in Travancore. One port which is an all-weather port and which could be used even during the monsoon as a port is called the Leepuram Port near Cape Comorin. It seems that this port was for a long time in use in ancient days. Now that port is not being used. If something could be done to improve that port and make it useful as a port, it will bring great advantage to the State. From the geographical point of view, it is a port very near the large Colombo harbour and it is the only rival port to the Tuticorin port. In Tuticorin I understand that ships will have to stand six or seven miles away from the harbour while here the ships can come within one mile distance of the port. So, if this Leepuram port could be improved it would attract a large amount of trade into Travancore.

Similarly, another port which Government can consider when the question of ports is before them is the Vizhingom port. This was also used as a port along with the Leepuram port very much in those days when the East India Company was having trade with South India. Therefore I request that steps may be taken immediately to investigate what should be done to revive trade in these ports.

Mr. M. K Ananthasiva Aiyar: I endorse the view expressed by my honourable friend Mr. Fletcher with regard to the Leepuram Port. During monsoon season it is found that all the ports on the Arabian sea are not fit for goods to be exported and

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imported. So, it will be to the advantage of the State if we have a port in the Bay of Bengal and the only port which could be opened on that side is the Leepuram port which is reported to have been carrying on good business as a port in ancient days. Perhaps that port was abolished through the intervention of the British Government by reason of the fact that there is some fort also there. Even if the fort is demolished it does not matter if we could get a very good port on the side of the Bay of Bengal where trade could be carried on during monsoon season and the trade which is now being carried on through the Tuticorin Port could be carried on within the State itself. The State is bound to increase its income in imports also.

Another point which I bring to the attention of Government is about the appointments made in the Cochin Harbour Offices. Sir, we have invested an equal amount with our partners the Cochin and the Madras Governments in the Cochin Harbour Scheme and we are also getting in return some income. But are we not entitled to participate in the offices that are being held there? The Cochin Government fought for that and they got a share in the appointments there, So, why not Travancore Government also stress that we are also entitled to a certain number of offices in the Cochin Harbour establishment? It is to bring these to the notice of Government that I rose to speak on the Demand.

Mr. P. G. Narayanan Unnithan: Sir, about the suggested ports, I may submit that because of the war conditions, even if it is otherwise possible to open these ports, it is not possible to get shipping.

Mr. James Fletcher: What I wanted was only an investigation to be made and not the starting of these ports.

Mr. P. G Narayanan Unnithan: It is possible for Government to consider the question on its merits. In this connection I may submit that Leepuram port is not safe during monsoon time. This year we wanted to import some Jaffna tobacco through that port, but we found that this port was also unsafe and we had to take it through Tuticorin and under certain special circumstances it was permitted to be imported through Tuticorin. As I said, the question could be considered on the merits when it comes up before Government. But it is not merely the convenience of landing that has to be considered. Nearness to the place where merchendise is available is also one important consideration.

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar: May I know how far Leepuram port is from the main road connecting Nagercoil and Cape Comorin?

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Mr. P. G. Narayanan Unnithan: It is very near Cape Comorin. I was mentioning that the port should be near enough to the place where hill produce could be brought. The question will be considered by Government when it comes up for consideration.

President: Order, order. The two questions are important. It is not the question of the Leepuram port alone that Government are having under consideration but the improvement of facilities, firstly, in Alleppey, including the installation of bigger cranes and improvement of the pier, the improvement of the harbour at Quilon, and the procuring of proper harbourage in the south of the State. It is probably true to say that Leepuram has special advantages. The reason is that there is a natural bay, and although it is not free from the monsoon onset, it is better in that respect than even Quilon. The trouble, however, is that in order to enable a port to develop, as the Excise Commissioner pointed out, the hinterland must produce enough material for exporting, or the demand of the country must be such that imports are forthcoming. The productions in and near Leepuram at present can only be said to be paddy, cocoanut and coir to a very small degree and mineral sands. As a matter of fact, on account of the large increase in the shipment of mineral sands and because it was considered that in addition to Colachel, Leepuram might also be developed, Government have been taking up the consideration of Leepuram and the improvement of the Colachel port at the same time. As the Excise Commissioner pointed out, at the present moment we do not get enough material even to repair the Trivandrum pier. Quite recently during the monsoon the Trivandrum—honourable members may not be fully aware of it—suffered some damage and for a day or two the situation looked very threatening indeed. Fortunately the evil was taken on hand immediately and it is comparatively safe now. But if the Trivandrum pier has to be improved greatly we cannot get materials for it. Steel of every kind is practically unprocurable and that is one of the reasons why we have not done as much as we should like to do as regards Quilon, Colachel and Leepuram.

The question about the employment of Travancoreans in the Cochin Harbour Offices has been taken up and has been pressed on the attention of the Imperial Government and the Harbour authorities during the last two or three years.

The question that Government be granted a sum of Rs. 23,343 under Demand XVII—Ports was put and carried. The grant was made.

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